

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
COLUMBIA DIVISION

CIVIL ACTION NO. 3:24-cv-06205-MGL-SVH

DINA SMITH,

Plaintiff,

v.

COMPLAINT
(Jury Trial Demanded)

RICHARDSON PLOWDEN &
ROBINSON, P.A. and LESLIE A.
COTTER, JR., ESQUIRE,

Defendants.

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Plaintiff Dina Smith (hereinafter referred to as "Plaintiff" or "Smith") presents her Complaint for unlawful discrimination in violation of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. §§ 621, *et. seq.*, as follows:

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff Smith is a citizen and resident of the United States, residing in Leesville, South Carolina.

2. Defendant Leslie A. Cotter, Jr., Esquire (hereinafter referred to as "Cotter") is a citizen and resident of the United States.

3. Richardson Plowden & Robinson, P.A. (hereinafter referred to as "RPR") is a company conducting business in South Carolina at 1900 Barnwell Street, Columbia,

South Carolina 29201.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

4. Jurisdiction of this Court is invoked pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1343(a)(4).

5. Venue of this Court is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b), the judicial district in which the events giving rise to this claim occurred.

BACKGROUND

6. Smith was hired by RPR to work as a paralegal for Cotter in May of 2019.

7. In or about her second year of employment with RPR, Smith was subjected to daily abuse and harrassment by Cotter.

8. Smith complained to Human Resources about Cotter's abuse and harrassment and was met with severe retaliation from Cotter.

9. After her third complaint to Human Resources about the abuse and harrassment she was being forced to endure from Cotter, RPR retaliated against Smith by firing her.

10. After firing Smith, RPR refused to release funds in Smith's 401(k) account until she signed a Settlement Agreement releasing RPR and Cotter of any wrongdoing or liability related to the discrimination and retaliation to which she had been subjected.

CAUSES OF ACTION

11. Smith's claim for recovery is under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. §§ 621.

COMPENSATORY AND EQUITABLE RELIEF

12. Smith sustained damages, including lost wages and benefits, future pecuniary losses, emotional pain, suffering, inconvenience, mental anguish, loss of enjoyment of life, and other nonpecuniary losses for which she is entitled to recovery under her causes of action.

13. Smith is also entitled to declaratory relief that a violation has occurred.

14. Smith is also entitled to equitable relief in the form of an injunction against future discrimination or retaliation.

EXEMPLARY DAMAGES

15. Smith is entitled to receive punitive damages because RPR and Cotter engaged in a discriminatory or retaliatory practice or in discriminatory or retaliatory practice with malice or with reckless indifference to the federally protected rights of Smith.

JURY DEMAND

16. Smith requests a trial by jury to the extent allowed by law.

WHEREFORE, Smith requests that Defendants RPR and Cotter answer this Complaint and that on final trial, Smith have judgment against Defendants RPR and Cotter for compensatory, declaratory, equitable, and exemplary damages, costs of suit, and interest as provided by law, and any further and other relief to which she may be

entitled.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dinra Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Dinra Smith

Pro se Plaintiff

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October 28, 2024